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Semester-Long IoT Hackathon Challenges Area Students

Winthrop University

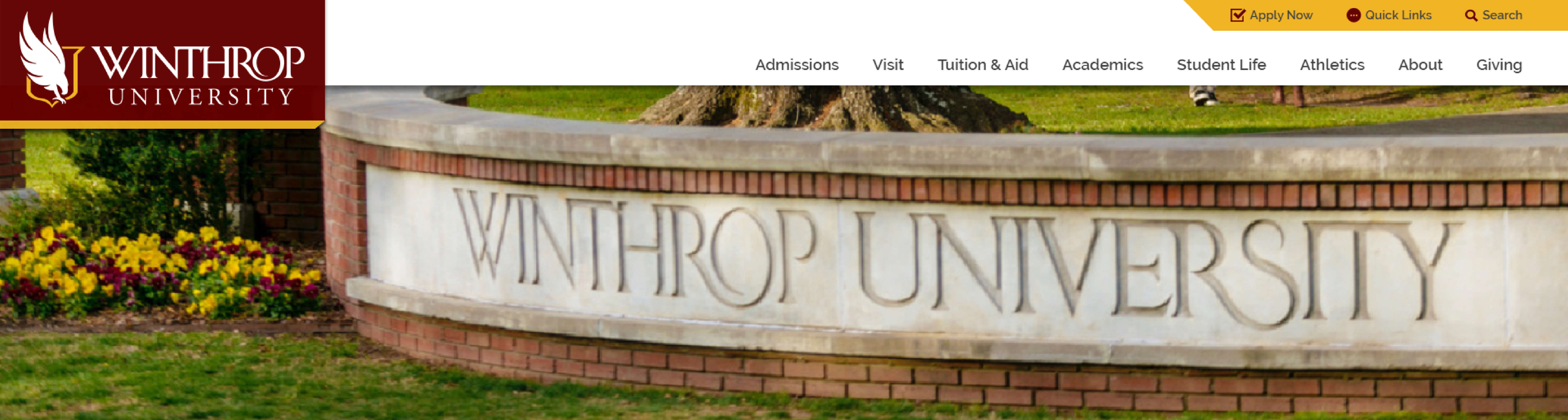
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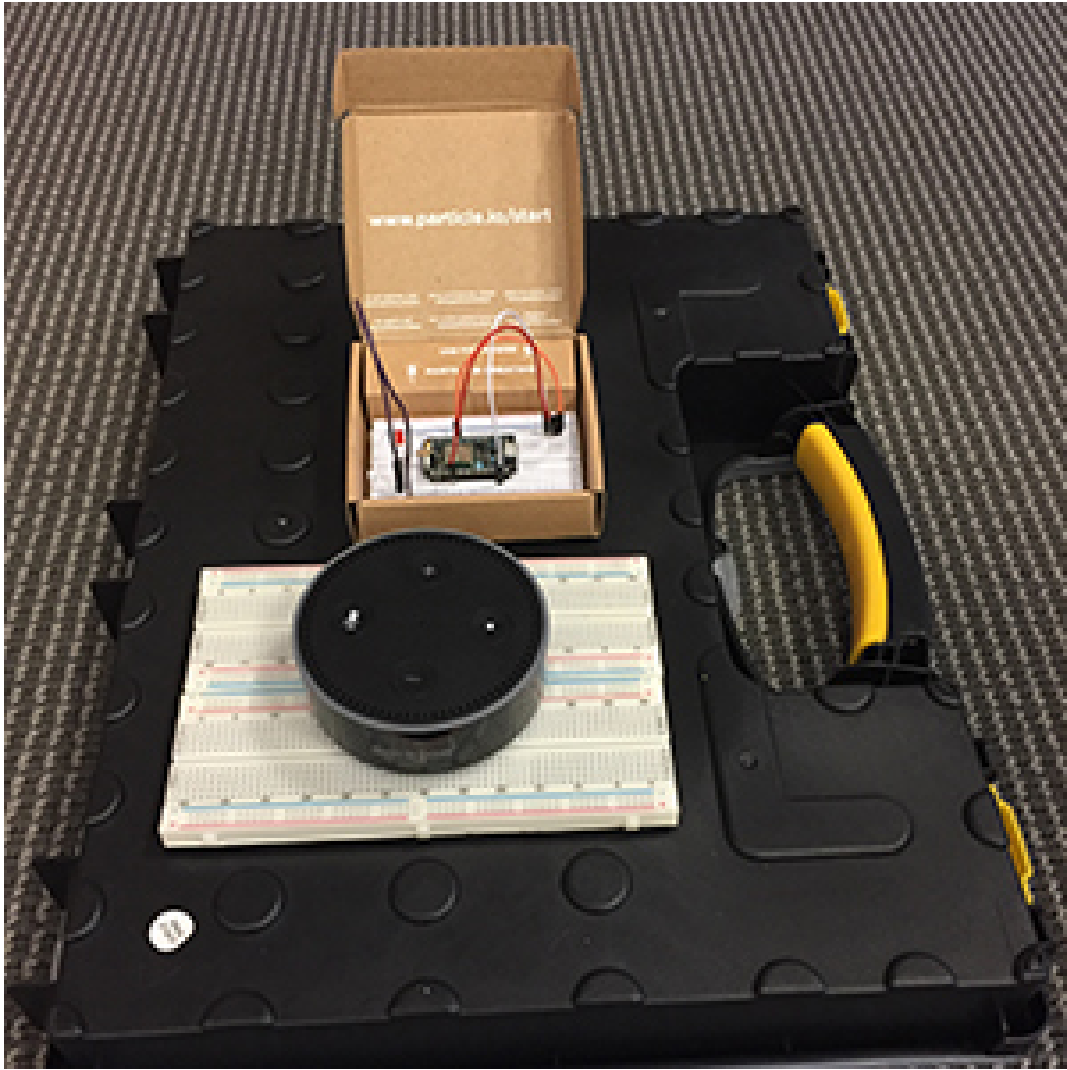
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Semester-Long IoT Hackathon Challenges Area Students

February 23, 2018

Quick Facts

- Called the Wired Hack 18.1-4, The Great IoT Hackathon, it is billed as the world's longest Internet of Things (IoT) hackathons.
- It is hosted by Rock Hill's Technology Incubator at Knowledge Park and organized by Winthrop University, York Tech, and Rock Hill high schools.
- The event challenges the technical skills and creativity of participants to transform the Technology Incubator space into what may be the world's first "connected" technology incubator using custom built IoT technology.



Displays of some of the items used during the Hackathon.

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA — **Internet of Things (IoT)** enthusiasts have spent this semester sharpening their skills through a multi-month hackathon focused on IoT.

Called the **Wired Hack 18.1-4, The Great IoT Hackathon**, it is billed as the world's longest Internet of Things (IoT) hackathons. It is hosted by Rock Hill's **Technology Incubator at Knowledge Park** and organized by Winthrop University, York Tech, and Rock Hill high schools. The event challenges the technical skills and creativity of participants to transform the Technology Incubator space into what may be the world's **first "connected" technology incubator** using custom built IoT technology.

Technology Incubator Director David Warner called the initiative "the coolest collaborative educational activity to take place in Rock Hill and York County." The action started in January with a 24-hour event where the 30 college, high school and community members came together to hear about predetermined project ideas such as: programming an IoT infrared blaster to turn on TVs, IoT lighting, activity maps for the space, a one dimensional pong game, and even an internet connected recycling bin. Participants also could explore their own ideas for further creation of IoT technology.

The first overnight hackathon event in January involved 24 hours of caffeine-fueled coding and creating, where the judges gave initial scores for projects submitted. **Jeremy Proffitt of LendingTree** and **Edward Granger of Red Ventures** sat on the panel of judges that recognized **two teams** for their functionality; the **LED Strip Game team**, comprised of Brett Pittman, Taylor Foxx, Elijah Flowers and Kenzie Hoyle, and the **IR Blaster team**, comprised of Philip Nelson, Blake McCloskey, Adam Van Scyoc, Tim Stafford and Haley Berry. Another team, the **Sensor team**Michael Speiser, Matea Milojkovic, Antonio Santos, Sybrina Outhay and Megan Taite—was lauded for their excellence in planning.

Andrew Besmer, a Winthrop assistant professor in the **Department of Computer Science and Quantitative Methods**, said: "Participants have been challenged to work creatively, technically, and most important collaboratively, to transform the Technology Incubator."

Comporium Communications is sponsoring the event and is allowing participants to keep the IoT devices that they build, which includes echo dots, particle photons, sensors, motors, power supplies and LEDs valued at more than \$100.

Participants are now meeting for mini-events on a bi-weekly basis and will continue until an **April 20 finale**, Besmer said. Mini events focus on different aspects of IoT covering everything from soldering skills with a local tech group **KPCoders** to custom 3D printing with **3D Systems**.

Besmer said he and other faculty members are delighted to work with Comporium to offer this one-of-a kind experience. "Students will be working on cutting edge hardware and software to build IoT devices similar to those being developed at Research & Development labs across the country," he said. "We are eager to see what they will come up with." More than half of the students are from Winthrop, while others attend Clemson and area high schools.

Comporium officials said they are pleased to be involved. "Exciting things are happening in Rock Hill's Knowledge Park," said **Matthew Dosch**, Comporium's executive vice president and chief operating officer. "With the support of institutions like Winthrop, York Technical College, and the Technology Incubator, entrepreneurs are pursuing innovative ideas and taking their concepts to market. As a provider of IoT services to our customers, Comporium is pleased to be able to sponsor this event and work with these very talented individuals."

Wired Hack 18.1-4, The Great IoT Hackathon, will conclude on April 20 at the Technology Incubator at Knowledge Park in downtown Rock Hill. The finale will involve another overnight coding event as participants wrap up their projects and install the technology in the space.

For more information about Wired Hack 18.1-4, go to <http://wiredhack.eventbrite.com> or contact Winthrop's Andrew Besmer at besmera@winthrop.edu.

Look for the activities on social media using these hashtags: #GreatIoTackathon #techforward #knowledgepark.

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